



CHRIST CHURCH
CROUCH END HILL
LONDON N8 8AX
CROSSLINKS

HIS BANNER OVER ME IS LOVE

A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL



FEBRUARY 2007 ISSUE 7.82

Vicar's three minute reflection



It is very common in our society to find celebrated and secular musicians sing about love. Oftentimes, this love is centred on love of the opposite sex which could climax into a marriage on a Friday and end with a bitter divorce the Friday following! How do people think they can give love, true love, when they do not know what love is, and neither do they know who Love is. How can you give what you do not have?

This month, I have decided to write about my beloved. My piece may not win an Oscar but if it helps you think about my beloved, it is well worth the effort. I am writing about the things I have known, which I have received, which has transformed my life. It is the love of Jesus for me.

**Your love held back
the axe when Justice
said, 'Cut it down!'**

It is beyond what I can describe but I still can't keep it to myself. Oh, my beloved, when I was far from you, as a complete stranger, fulfilling the desires of my flesh and mind, your love restrained me. You gently coaxed me. My knuckles buckled when I gripped the church bench in front of me during repeated altar calls. Thank you for assuring me that all my sins, no matter how dark the stains, could be removed and my life could become as clean as new fallen snow.

It was your love that restrained me from committing the sin which would lead to my eternal damnation and it withheld me from self destruction. Your love held back the axe when Justice said, 'Cut it down!' It was your love that took me to the wilderness, stripped me there, and made me feel the guilt of my sin. It was your love that spoke so tenderly and comfortably to me when I was dismayed. It said 'Come to me, and I will give you rest.' Oh, what matchless love! I love to have You near me, Lord. I feel secure and loved in Your presence, like a child nestled in its mother's arms. The child in me still desires that You take me in Your arms, place Your hand on my head and bless me. Oh! Jesus, I sense your joy in my accomplishments.



How can I ever forget your reassuring words: 'I am Yours and You are mine.' Your tone was so kind when you said, 'The Father himself loves you' How can my soul forget those times of fellowship when you unveiled yourself to me. Thank you that I am not a spiritual orphan wondering aimlessly. I am Your adopted child. I know You love Your children far more than any other of Your creation, and I love You best with all my heart.

In life's celebrations, You rejoice with me. In life's challenges, You urge me on. In life's discouragements, You encourage me. In the storms, You calm my fears. In my insecurities, You remind me of how much You treasure me. In my victories, You are jubilant. In my defeats You are closer than ever. I relate to the affection David expressed for you in Psalm 139 (The Message): "Is there any place I can go to avoid your spirit or to be out of your sight? If I climb to the sky, You are there! If I go underground, You are there! If I flew on morning's wings ... You'd find me in a minute - You are already there waiting! ... Oh yes, You shaped me first inside, then out; ... I thank you, High God - You are breathtaking ... You know me inside and out, You know every bone in my body ... Your thoughts - how rare, how beautiful! God, I can never fully comprehend You"

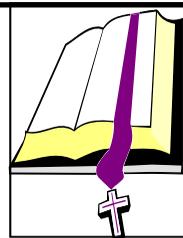
You are my past, my present, my future, my life, my all. I love You Jesus from the depths of my heart - because You first loved me and showed me what love is. You did this not in words alone but also in deed. Your death on the cross was the ultimate confirmation. I feel unqualified to say I love You in the sense with which You loved me. But Jesus, help me to love You as Your love teaches me the way of Love.

Dele Agbelusi

Memory Verse

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

John 15:13



A TIME TO LAUGH: WHY HAVING FUN KEEPS THE JOY IN OUR MARRIAGE



I'm married to a joker. Greg can see the funny side of anything, even in the dead of night, or when disaster strikes. He's always playing practical jokes on me. So I was delighted the day I finally got "pay back."

My plan was simple: hide in a dark corner and ambush Greg as he walked in the house from the garage. It was perfect! While some people don't like to be scared, my husband thrives on it. I knew he'd find it hilarious—and I'd get him back for all his practical jokes.

The garage door lifted slowly as Greg's Honda Civic approached after a long day at work.

He'll never expect this, I thought, and laughed as I anticipated the look on his face.

I giggled as I hid in the corner awaiting his arrival. I remained perfectly still as the door opened. Greg took two steps in and then noticed a dark, sinister figure standing near his left shoulder. At that exact moment I leaned in toward him. Startled, Greg let out a shrieking yelp and flew back into the door.

"Sweet revenge!" I yelled as Greg massaged his pounding heart. We exchanged high-fives and embraced. "Welcome home!" I said, as we both laughed.

After Greg and I settled into a quiet evening, I began to reflect on the fact that one of my favourite things about our marriage is the fun we have together. I smiled as I remembered Greg's scream and the joy it gave me to scare him. The best part was when, later that evening, he told me how my little practical joke actually helped him feel connected to me. Who knew that my prank could turn into emotional intimacy?

During our 12 years of marriage, Greg and I have discovered that laughter is healthy, both emotionally and physically.

(continued on page 5)

A time to laugh (continued from page 4)

Having a sense of humour helps keep our relationship fresh. One of the first things that attracted me to Greg was his ability to make me laugh.

Laughter brought me joy during our courtship, and it continues to bring me happiness all these years later. Often in the midst of life's chaos, a simple smile or a giggle can lighten tense situations. It creates a relaxed kind of intimacy. Greg claims that after a long day at work, coming home to an environment filled with laughter significantly eases his stress level.

Humour in marriage has always fascinated me. As I researched what the experts had to say about fun in marriage, I was overwhelmed by its importance. In his book *Fighting for Your Marriage*, marriage researcher Dr. Howard Markman reports that the amount of fun couples had together emerged as the single strongest factor in their overall marital happiness. Other positives were occurring in these relationships—but good relationships became great when they were preserving both the quantity and quality of fun times together.

But the sad truth is that many couples no longer share the type of fun they had when they were dating or newly married. It's almost as though the daily grind of life has zapped their ability and/or desire to have fun together. It certainly makes sense: keeping up with jobs, kids, church, and friends makes it increasingly difficult to find time together. Throw conflict into the pot, and you have the perfect environment for removing the fun from life.

Greg and I made a commitment that our relationship would never lose that sense of fun. So we've made it a priority—we even schedule it on our calendars! And we protect that time. We don't talk about difficult topics or bring up subject matter that may lead to conflict. Over the years I can recall how laughter and fun have influenced both stressful and joyful times in our home.

By Erin Smalley

10-MINUTE-BIBLE STUDY ON LOVE: 1 Corinthians 13

G. Campbell Morgan said that examining this chapter is like dissecting a flower to understand it. If you tear it apart too much, you lose the beauty. Alan Redpath said one could get a spiritual suntan from the warmth of this chapter!

In 1 Corinth. 13 Paul wants to emphasize the supremacy of love.

The Corinthians were enamored with spiritual gifts, particularly the gift of tongues. Paul reminds them that even the gift of tongues is meaningless, and unprofitable without love.

Tongues of men and of angels: The Greek word translated tongues has the simple idea of “languages” in some places (Acts 2:11, Revelation 5:9). This has led some to say the gift of tongues is simply the ability to communicate the gospel in other languages; it is the capability of learning languages quickly. But I think the way tongues is used here shows it can, and usually does, refer to a supernatural language by which a believer communicates to God. There is no other way the reference to tongues of . . . angels can be understood.

In verse 3, Paul moves on to Prophecy, knowledge, and faith to do miracles. All these are irrelevant apart from love. You may wonder why Paul is writing so negatively about these gifts. The Corinthian Christians like many Christians today were missing the *motive* and the *goal* of the gifts, making them an end in themselves. Paul draws their attention back to love.

A man with faith can move great mountains; but he will set them down right in the path of somebody else – or right on somebody else - if he doesn't have love!

It isn't an issue of love versus the gifts. A church should never be forced to choose between love and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Paul is emphasizing the focus and goal of the gifts: love, not the gifts for their own sake. “Possession of the *charismata* is not the sign of the Spirit; Christian love is.” (Fee)

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NOTICE BOARD

Stewardship Boxes 2007/2008

Envelope boxes for 2007/2008 stewardship giving, will be available from 1st March 2007, for members of the stewardship scheme.

Members of the congregation who are not in the stewardship scheme, and want information on Stewardship and Gift Aid giving, can contact Vera Freeburne, Stewardship Secretary.

HOW CAN THEY BELIEVE IF THEY DO NOT HEAR ?

It is our desire to visit our neighbours at the residential complex situated at Hornsey Lane. More than 300 families live in this Estate. Like Paul who recorded a vision he saw in Acts 16:9 where a man stood and begged him: "Come over to Macedonia and help us". I believe we have had a similar call to Hornsey Lane Housing estate to share the Gospel of our Lord with them. Will you be available? have you ever had the privilege of someone shutting the door on your face? This is a unique opportunity to leave your comfort zones and get your hands dirty in God's vineyard. Remember, you will not be going alone. Jesus is going to be there with you. We will keep you posted as time goes by, but in the meantime KEEP PRAYING

D.A.

THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

This month we pray for members of our church family whose surnames begin with K, L, M, N

Kafta Lillian; Kasozi Rose; Kirsakye Sydney & Bernadette;
Kovar Jan & Elizabeth; Lalobo Caesar; Lawson Eddie; Lebon Brian; Lebaigue Danny, Lester Eve; Lines Florence; Liscott Peter; Lukomona Desiree; Macauley Grace; Mamas Helen; McFarlane Susan, Meadows Patricia; Mercer Richard & Mary; Mercer Andrew; Miller Lisa; Moore Nadja; Morrison Karen; Murphy Charles; Myers-Nobbs Andrew; Nobadula Thembekile

SONGS INSPIRED BY SORROW

We know it was tough for Martin Rinkert who was a minister in the little town of Eilenburg in Germany some 350 years ago. He was the son of a poor coppersmith, but somehow, managed to work his way through an education. Finally, in the year 1617, he was offered the post of Archdeacon in his hometown parish. A year later, what has come to be known as the Thirty-Years-War broke out. His town was caught right in the middle. In 1637, the massive plague that swept across the continent hit Eilenburg... people died at the rate of fifty a day and the man called upon to bury most of them was Martin Rinkert. In all, over 8,000 people died, including Martin's own wife.

His labours finally came to an end about 11 years later, just one year after the conclusion of the war. His ministry spanned 32 years, all but the first and the last overwhelmed by the great conflict that engulfed his town. It was tough for Martin Rinkert to be thankful. But he managed.

Those who see God's hand in everything can leave everything in God's hands.

Listen to what he wrote: Now thank we all our God With heart and hands and voices; Who wondrous things hath done, In whom his world rejoices. What a magnificent spirit to come through in the midst of times of virtually constant devastation! There is a great lesson there. Perhaps the words he used were Martin Rinkert's way of reminding himself just how to go about being thankful even while surrounded by such tremendous adversity. Thank God...with heart and hand and voices.

For Martin Rinkert, the voice was the easiest of all. He had sung in the famous choir at St. Thomas's in Leipzig as a boy. He enjoyed the songs and folk melodies of his country. He even wrote dramas to be acted in public. Obviously, his talent was put to use in the composition of hymns. Thanksgiving with the voice was as natural for him as anything he did.

10-minute Bible study on love (continued from page 6)

If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. This is what Jesus told the rich young ruler to do (Matthew 16: 19-23), and he refused. But even if the rich young ruler had done what Jesus said, yet had not love, it would have been of no profit. Verse three goes on further to consider the case of some early Christians so arrogant as to think that the blood of martyrdom would wash away any sin. They were so proud about their ability to endure suffering for Jesus, that they thought it was the most important thing in the Christian life. It is important, but not the *most* important. Without love, I gain nothing even if it is done willingly.

“Lest the Corinthians should say to the apostle, What is this love you are talking about? Or how shall we know if we have it? The apostle here gives thirteen ways. I will discuss a few of them.

Love does not envy: Envy is one of the least productive and most damaging of all sins. It accomplishes nothing, except to hurt. Love keeps its distance from envy, and does not resent it when someone else is promoted or blessed. Clarke describes the people who **do not envy**: “They are ever willing that *others* should be preferred before *them*.”

Love does not parade itself: Love in action can work anonymously. It does not have to have the limelight or the attention to do a good job, or to be satisfied with the result. Love gives because it loves to give, not out of the sense of praise it can have from **Love... thinks no evil:** Literally, this means “love does not store up the memory of any wrong it has received.” Love will put away the hurts of the past instead of clinging to them.

(to be continued next month)

LAUGHTER LINES

A lovely heart-shaped box of chocolates was received on Valentine's Day by a student from her newest date, another student. On the enclosed card was the inscription, 'To Helen—with all my savings.



WITH LOVE FROM ME

A young man was ordering a bouquet and giving very specific guidelines. "Nothing fragrant," he said. "Nothing too tall or too wild. And no bright colours, please. I like my girlfriend to have flowers that remind her of me." "Your name, sir?" asked the florist. "Mr Bland," the man replied.

PRAYER REMINDER FROM A FOUR-YEAR-OLD

A daily time of worship with God is very important. So much so that when we miss it others can tell. Such was the case when four-year-old Andrew made an honest mistake and spilled something in their house. His mother responded in a screaming tirade. The little psychologist made an astute observation: "Mommy, you forgot to ask Jesus to help you be nice today, didn't you?"

Christian Parenting Today May/ June 1991, p. 73

PRICELESS PRAYER

Betty Traver always tries to instil in her children the need for prayer. Years ago, a perfect opportunity for prayer arose in their 1956 station wagon. They were setting off on an errand when the old clunker refused to start. Seizing the moment, Betty turned to her four-year-old son and asked him to pray. Closing his eyes tightly, he prayed, "Dear Lord, please help this piece of junk start."

* Christian Reader, July/Aug. 1991, p. 40

STORY OF THE MONTH THE LIFE SAVING STATION

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur, there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was no more than a hut, and there was only one boat; but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea. With no thought for themselves, they went out day and night, tirelessly searching for the lost. Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to be associated with the station and give their time, money, and effort to support the work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little lifesaving station grew.



Some of these new members of the lifesaving station were unhappy that the building was so crude and poorly equipped. They felt that a more comfortable place should be provided as the first refuge of those who were saved from the sea. They replaced the emergency cots with beds and put better furniture in the enlarged building. Now the lifesaving station became a popular gathering place for its members, and they decorated it beautifully and furnished it exquisitely because they used it as sort of a club. Fewer members were now interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, so they hired lifeboat crews to do this work. The lifesaving motif still prevailed in this club's decoration, and there was a memorial lifeboat in the room where the club initiations were held.

About this time a large ship was wrecked off the coast, and the hired crews brought in boatloads of cold, wet, half-drowned people. They were dirty and sick, and some of them were foreigners. The beautiful new club was in chaos. Immediately, the property committee hired someone to rig up a shower house outside the club, where victims of shipwrecks could be cleaned up before coming inside.

LAUGHTER LINES

I HAVE NO CHOICE

Eve: 'Adam, do you love me?'

Adam: 'Who else?'

BRAGGING RIGHTS

A Texas rancher met up with a Wisconsin dairy farmer. The two men began talking about their land and the milkman told the cattlemans that he operated his business on 125 acres. The Texan scoffed at such a small parcel of land. He said, "Yankee, that ain't nothin'. On my ranch I can get in my truck at sunrise and I won't reach the fence line of my property until sunset." The dairy farmer snorted, "Yeah, I used to have a truck like that."

"Panorama of Parenting," Howard Hendricks, Dallas Theological Seminary,

TOUGH COURSE!

Jim was not a good golfer, but he wanted to fit in with the guys who did golf well, so he began to invent stories about his prowess on the course. After listening to Jim's tales, some of the guys invited him to join them for a round of golf. No amount of practice would prepare him for the big day so, as usual, he used his mouth more than his clubs. On the first tee he addressed the ball three times and missed each time. After missing the ball for the fourth time, Jim turned to his foursome and remarked, "This is really a tough course!"

Pastor's Professional Research Service, Nov./Dec. 1991

ENVIRONMENTAL DILEMMAS

We should all exercise caution and concern over the treatment of our environment. Sometimes, though, it seems like there's no right answer. At the grocery store a shop attendant hit on this dilemma when he asked the customer, "Do you want to destroy a tree by using a paper bag or endanger the environment with plastic?" Reader's Digest, Feb. 1991, p. 58

The Life Saving Mission (continued from page 12)

At the next meeting, there was a split in the club membership. Most of the members wanted to stop the club's life-saving activities because they felt they were unpleasant and a hindrance to the normal social life of the club. A small number of members insisted upon lifesaving as their primary purpose and pointed out that they were still called a lifesaving station. The small group's members were voted down and told that if they wanted to save lives, they could begin their own lifesaving station down the coast.

They did.

As the years went by, however, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old station. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded. History continued to repeat itself, and if you visit that seacoast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along that shore.

Shipwrecks are frequent in those waters, but most of the passengers drown. Isn't this the sordid picture of our twenty-first century church? We started out on a life saving mission. We were willing to lay down our lives for unbelievers for the sake of Jesus and his love for us. But what are we today? many of our churches are just glorified social clubs. We must retrace our steps.

As disciples of Jesus, our primary task is to go and make disciples. (See Matthew 28:19.) To put it another way, we are to go and save lives. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget our purpose. We need to recover our passion for life-saving. We need to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. (See James 1:22). Our saviour has no hands but ours. He has no means of reaching out to the world with His life saving message (the Gospel) but through his church. Shall we live unattended our primary task because we want to be comfortable? Let us get into the field and get our hands dirty!

D.A. (Adapted from Youth Specialties)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

I cannot say "our" if I live only for myself.

I cannot say "Father" if I do not endeavour each day to act like his child.

I cannot say "who art in heaven" if I am laying up no treasures there.

I cannot say "hallowed be thy name" if I am not striving for holiness.

I cannot say "thy Kingdom come" if I am not doing all in my power to hasten that wonderful event.

I cannot say "thy will be done" if I am disobedient to his Word.

I cannot say "on earth as it is in heaven" if I'll not serve him here and now.

I cannot say "give us this day our daily bread" if I am dishonest or am seeking things by subterfuge.

I cannot say "forgive us our debts" if I harbour a grudge against anyone.

I cannot say "lead us not into temptation" if I deliberately place myself in its path.

I cannot say "deliver us from evil" if I do not put on the whole armour of God.

I cannot say "thine is the kingdom" if I do not give the King the loyalty due him from a faithful subject.

I cannot attribute to him "the power" if I fear what men say do.

I cannot ascribe to him "the glory" if I'm seeking honour only for myself, and I cannot say "forever" if the horizon of my life is bounded completely by time.

Author Unknown

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service Prepared by Christian Women of Paraguay

Theme: United under God's Tent

Date : Friday 2nd March 2007

Middle Lane Methodist Church, N8 (11am)

St. Peter -in -Chains Womersley Road N8 (8pm)

THEOPHILUS: The Real Enemy

The devil continues with his plans to deceive, but ...

We've come a long way, Baby! Remember the early days of America?

Don't remind me, Comrade! We had so little influence here back then.

Yeah—the hearts of the people were turned to Jesus. Even their leaders fasted and prayed before making decisions!

And so the Creator blessed them with newfangled wealth, freedom and influence.

Well, you can thank me for changing all that! Humans are now congratulating themselves on their own achievements, and wallowing in materialism and self-centeredness.

Pride, you can't take all of the credit! Lust, Gluttony, Covetousness, Ambition, Fornication, Witchcraft, Deception, and the rest of us are just as involved!

Because of us they began to tamper with the Creator's absolute standards and to tolerate sin.

That which the Enemy says is **never** right could be **sometimes** right, depending on the situation.

Just as our Master predicted—lines of right and wrong blurred. In time, all sorts of ugly behavior became acceptable—even admired! Americans are no longer shocked.

They live only to please themselves.

The Creator calls drunkenness sin. I made them think it's a disease. And the sin of sodomy... I call it "gay rights, an alternative lifestyle."

Yes, but it was my idea to call murder "abortion." The Enemy says "Thou shall not kill," but look how many women are killing their own children now with a clear conscience!

So predictable! Sodom and Gomorrah. The Roman Empire. Ancient Greece. And now **America!** Ha! Ha! Ha!

The greater they are, the harder they fall!

Enough talk, Comrades! Let's celebrate!

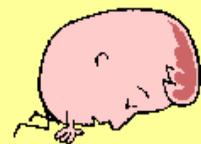
Yes...

Oh no! **LOOK!!!**

Trouble!

They're waking up!

Heavenly Father, in the name and through the blood of my Lord Jesus Christ, I pray for our President and for every national, state, and local official who serves with him...

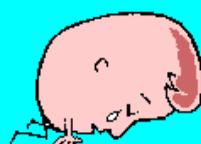


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Give them the wisdom and courage to uphold our Constitution which established a republic based on Your absolute laws, not a democracy based on the changing whims of man's reasoning.

O Lord, may our leaders cast down every law, policy, and personal example which weakens marriages, families, or Your moral standards. May they realize that all authority comes from You, not the voters, and that one day they will stand before You to give an account of the power You gave to them.

I base this prayer on the promise of Your Word, that if I will humble myself, pray, seek your face, and turn from my wicked ways, then You will hear from heaven, forgive my sin, and heal my land...



Quick, Comrades! Back to work. **STOP** this from spreading!!!

Motto /Text for the year
"I CAN DO EVERYTHING THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES
ME STRENGTH" *PHIL. 4:13*

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are trying to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ.

As a body of believers, we offer to all who come regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday** - **8.00am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
- **10.30am.** Main service with Crèche facilities

There is family/parade service once every month– usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.

- **5.00pm.** Evening worship

ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

- Monday - Baby n' Toddler Group (**10.00 am to 12 noon**) -Term time only
- Brownies meeting in Church (**5.30 pm**)
- Next Prayer Meetings 26th February & 19th March (**8pm**)
- Wednesday - Bible Fellowship in the Hall (**7:30pm**)
- Friday - Home Group at Flat 10, 3 Waverley Road, N8 (**2.30 pm**)
- Scouts meeting in church and hall (**6.00 pm**)

Enquiry/Counselling - please phone 020 8340 1566

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YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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